MALIBU COMICS
ULTRAVERSE
YEAR ZERO
THE DEATH OF
THE SQUAD
#2 $2.95
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THE SQUAD BLAZES HEADLONG TOWARDS ITS TRAGIC DESTINY!
DIRECT EDITION
HUDNALL
DOVE
WHITING

THE NEW SENSATION

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IT HAPPENED SO FAST. LIKE CHARACTERS IN A DREAM, WE WERE SWEPT ALONG BY THE TIDE OF WONDER.
ONE MINUTE WE WERE ORDINARY PEOPLE WITH ORDINARY LIVES, THE NEXT WE WERE ULTRA-HUMANS... AND OUR LIVES WERE STUFF OF LEGENDS.
TWO DAYS AFTER WE MET IN THAT RESTAURANT, TOM HAD US OUT IN THE DESERT TO TEST THE LIMITS OF OUR POWERS.
YOU COULD SAY THIS WAS THE SQUAD'S FIRST REAL ADVENTURE TOGETHER...
FIRST OFF, WE NEED TO FIGURE OUT WHAT WE'RE CAPABLE OF. THEN, WE NEED TO TRAIN UNTIL WE CAN DO IT WITH OUR EYES CLOSED.
WHEN WE'RE READY, WE'LL THROW A PRESS CONFERENCE AND ANNOUNCE OURSELVES TO THE WORLD. BUT, WE'LL NEED TO BE ABLE TO PUT ON A GOOD SHOW.
AND THAT TAKES PRACTICE, PRACTICE, PRACTICE! SO LET'S GET BUSY!
HERE'S A SAMPLE OF WHAT I'M CAPABLE OF!

HEY! I CAN DO THAT, TOO!
UH... ALL I CAN DO IS JUMP. CAN'T FLY!
HA HA— HAPPY LANDINGS!
HA HA HA
OOF!
TOM! ARE YOU OKAY?
YEAH, NO PROBLEM. I JUST HAVE TO WORK ON THOSE LANDINGS.
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WE PRACTICED UNTIL WE HAD A HANDLE ON OUR TALENTS. I COULD RADIATE ENERGY BEAMS FROM MY EYES.
CARLOS JIMENEZ COULD MOVE OBJECTS WITH HIS MIND, MAKE THEM FLOAT. EVEN HIMSELF.
JAMAL BLASS CAUSED EXPLOSIONS. SCIENTISTS LATER SAID HE HAD THE POWER TO REORGANIZE MOLECULES, VIOLENTLY.

OUR SIGNIFICANT OTHERS CAME TO WATCH. MY BOYFRIEND, PETE. CARLOS' WIFE AND THEIR SON. JAMAL'S GIRLFRIEND, PATTI.
THEY SAT AROUND TALKING, GETTING BORED, SIPPING SODAS, REALIZING THEY WERE FIFTH WHEELS.

THAT'S WHEN THE SEEDS OF DISSENSION WERE SOWN.

PETE STARTED IN ALMOST AS SOON AS WE WERE HOME.
WHY DO YOU HAVE TO HANG ALL OVER THAT GUY TOM?
I WASN'T "HANGING ALL OVER HIM." WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU KNOW DAMN WELL WHAT I MEAN! YOU HAD YOUR HANDS ON HIM EVERY CHANCE YOU GOT!
HE'S A MUSCLE-BOUND GOON! A FREAK! WHY DON'T YOU SEE THAT!?
A FREAK?
IF HE'S A FREAK, WHAT DOES THAT MAKE ME?
HEY, I'M SORRY! I WAS JUST A LITTLE JEALOUS, OKAY?
I DON'T LIKE SEEING MY WOMAN WITH ANOTHER GUY.
C'MON, HONEY... LET'S MAKE NICE.
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YO! YO! JAMAL!
CAN WE GET YOUR AUTOGRAPH!
SURE! WHAT D'YA WANT ME TO SIGN?
SIGN MY BALL!
THAT'S THE SUCKER THAT BLEW UP MY VAN! BLEW OFF MY BOY JEROME'S HAND!
I WANT HIS ASS, BUT IT AIN'T GONNA BE EASY. HE'S DEALIN' IN SOME KINDA MAJOR VOODOO, BRO'.

WHAT DO YOU LOSERS WANT?
YOU BEST NOT BE DISSIN' THE ZULUS, WE GOTTA MESSAGE FOR YOUR SORRY ASS.
THEN CALL MY ANSWERING MACHINE.
YOU MAY GOT THAT ULTRA EDGE, YOUNG BROTHER, BUT WE GOT *NUMBERS* ON OUR SIDE.
YOU CAN'T PROTECT YOUR *SISTER*, OR YO '*HO* 'ROUND THE CLOCK. YOU CAN'T KEEP YOUR MAMA FROM CATCHIN' LEAD SOME NIGHT.
YOU *DO* WHAT WE *TELL YOU*, OR YOU WILL *KNOW* THE ZULU'S IDEA OF *RETRIBUTION!*
YOU JUST SAID THE WRONG THING. YOU *SHOULD'VE* SAID: "WE'LL BE GOOD NOW. WE'RE NOT GOING TO CAUSE ANY TROUBLE NO MORE."
YES, MY BROTHERS... YOU DEFINITELY F'ED UP JUST NOW.
NO. YOU JUST SAID THE WRONG THING.
ADIOS, BLACK.

THE NEXT DAY, WHILE WE PRACTICED, JAMAL TOLD US WHAT HAPPENED. HE WANTED OUR HELP.
THIS GANG TERRORIZES THE NEIGHBORHOOD. THEY SELL CRACK. THEY HURT PEOPLE FOR FUN. I WANT THEM PUT DOWN.
YOU DON'T MEAN KILL THEM, DO YOU?
NO, LINDA. THEY'RE JUST LOST SOULS. THEIR LIVES HAVE BEEN CRAP FROM DAY ONE.
BUT THAT'S NO EXCUSE FOR WHAT THEY DO. AND I WANT THEM TO KNOW THEY CAN'T CONTINUE ON THE PATH THEY'VE CHOSEN.
WE NEED TO CONVINCE THEM THAT CRIME DOESN'T PAY.
IT WAS MY IDEA TO DO THIS HERO THING, BUT NOW I'M HAVING SOME DOUBTS. I MEAN, THESE GUYS HAVE GUNS. INNOCENT PEOPLE COULD GET HURT.
LISTEN, MAN, I KNOW THESE P*TOS. I GREW UP WITH GANGS! I AGREE WITH JAMAL. WE SHOULD MAKE AN EXAMPLE HERE. IT COULD DO SOME GOOD.
ALL RIGHT, THEN. IF EVERYONE AGREES.
LINDA?
I'LL DO IT IF WE ALL SWEAR NO ONE GETS KILLED OR SERIOUSLY HURT.
WE MADE A PACT THEN, THAT WE WOULD NEVER KNOWINGLY MAIM OR KILL ANOTHER HUMAN BEING.
WE KNEW OUR POWERS DIDN'T MAKE US GODS. WE WEREN'T GIVEN A MANDATE TO RIGHT WRONGS.
WE ALL JUST WANTED TO LIVE IN A BETTER WORLD.

WE'D JUST PULLED UP TO JAMAL'S HOUSE, WHEN HIS MOTHER CAME RUNNING OUT SCREAMING.
JAMAL! JAMAL!
THEY TOOK YOUR SISTER! THEY TOOK YOLANDA! AND THEY TOOK PATTI, TOO!
ZULU
THIS IS WHAT YOUR BROTHER DID, 'HO! HE MADE ME A GIMP! YOU THINK I CAN FORGIVE THAT!?
H-HE DIDN'T MEAN IT! I-I'M SURE!
ZULU
AKAI
I GOT NO HAND, WOMAN! MY RIGHT HAND! GONE!
I AIN'T GOOD WITH MY LEFT, BUT, CAN'T MISS POINT BLANK, DIG?
YOU'RE GONNA CONVINCE JAMAL TO DO WHAT WE TELL HIM. OR YOUR FINE ASSES WILL BE CHILLIN' ON THE SLAB.
WADOOM
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LET THE WOMEN GO!
NOW!
THESE 'HOS ARE DEAD 'LESS YOU BACK THE F DOWN!
WHAT YOU DOIN' HERE, WHITE BOY!? GET YOUR CRACKER ASS BACK TO WEST L.A WHERE IT BELONGS!
YOU'RE WAY OVER YOUR HEAD, FOOL! PUT THOSE GUNS DOWN WHILE YOU STILL CAN!
MAKE US!

DODGERS
AAAH!
ARE YOU GOING TO DROP YOUR GUNS NOW OR ARE WE GOING TO HAVE TO GET SERIOUS?
TO HELL WITH YOU!
KRAK
LESSON NUMBER ONE: VIOLENCE GETS YOU NOWHERE.
AAAH! MY HAND!

ZULU
LESSON NUMBER TWO: DON'T GO CAUSIN' ANYMORE TROUBLE. IT'S TIME TO GO STRAIGHT.
OKAY...OKAY ...WE GET THE MESSAGE!
ZULU
AKAI
VCR
C'MON. I'LL TAKE YOU HOME.
WE DISARMED THEM, SAYING WE'D BE BACK IF THEY CAUSED ANY MORE TROUBLE. WE ALSO HAD THEM PASS ON THE WORD THAT...
THE SQUAD WILL BE AROUND TO STOP THE VIOLENCE. SO TELL YOUR FRIENDS TO STAY CLEAN.
BUT AS WE WERE LEAVING, THE WORLD CAUGHT UP TO US.

THE POLICE RESPONDED TO COMPLAINTS ABOUT EXPLOSIONS AND GUNFIRE BUT WE WERE THE GANG WHO GOT ARRESTED.
THE GIRLS COMPLAINED AND TOLD THE COPS WHAT HAPPENED, BUT THEY IGNORED THEM FORTUNATELY, THEY WEREN'T ARRESTED, TOO.
WE SPENT THE NIGHT IN JAIL THE MEN WERE ALL IN ONE CELL AND I WAS IN ANOTHER. NO CHARGES WERE FILED.
WE WONDERED WHAT THE HELL WAS GOING ON.
IN THE MORNING, THEY TOOK US TO MEET THE MAYOR AND THE CHIEF OF POLICE.
WHAT YOU DID WAS WRONG. EVEN THOUGH THE GANG CLEARLY COMMITTED A FELONY, YOU SHOULD'VE CALLED THE POLICE. VIGILANTISM IS JUST AS MUCH A CRIME AS WHAT THEY DID.
BUT WE'RE IMPRESSED BY THE WAY YOU DID IT. NO ONE WAS HURT, AND YOU DIDN'T DO ANYTHING THAT COULD BE DESCRIBED AS UNREASONABLE FORCE.
SO WE WANT TO MAKE YOU AN OFFER...

THEY SAID WE'D BE ALLOWED TO FIGHT CRIME UNDER THE CITY'S SUPERVISION, BUT WE'D BE PROSECUTED IF WE TRIED TO GO IT ALONE.
I'D LIKE TO INTRODUCE THE WORLD TO L.A.'S NEWEST CRIME-FIGHTING TEAM, THE SQUAD!
The Squad
WHEN WE LEFT THE BUILDING, THERE WAS A CROWD OF PEOPLE CHEERING US FOR WHAT WE DID.
THE CITY'S MOTIVE TO MAKE US THEIR OWN BECAME REAL CLEAR.
THE WORLD WAS INTRODUCED TO THE SQUAD'S IMAGE IN THAT PRESS CONFERENCE. FASHION PEOPLE SAID WE DEFINED A NEW, HEALTH-CONSCIOUS LOOK.
SO WE HAD COSTUMES MADE THAT WERE SIMILAR TO THE CLOTHES WE WERE ARRESTED IN.
JET
COSMOPOLITAN
Rolling Stone
THE MEDIA SAW THE PUBLIC'S REACTION AND JUMPED. OVER THE NEXT COUPLE OF MONTHS WE WERE ON THE COVER OF ALMOST EVERY MAGAZINE AND GUESTS ON ALMOST EVERY TALK SHOW.
THAT WAS JUST THE BEGINNING.

THERE ARE SOME SITUATIONS THE POLICE DON'T LIKE TO DEAL WITH.
DANGEROUS ONES. COPS CAN GET KILLED RAIDING A SCENE LIKE THIS.
SO THEY STARTED USING US FOR THOSE CASES.
WE WERE GOOD AT TAKING DOWN THE OPPOSITION WITHOUT CASUALTIES.
IT MADE THE POLICE HAPPY, THE CITY HAPPY, THE PUBLIC HAPPY...
AND THE MEDIA LOVED US!

WE STARTED TO GET MAIL. A DELUGE OF IT.
MOST CAME TO C.TY HALL.
WE'D SIT AROUND THE COFFEE ROOM ON SLOW DAYS, GOING THROUGH THE LETTERS SOME WERE FULL OF PRAISE, SOME WERE COME-ONS, BUT MOST WERE CRIES FOR HELP.
THERE WERE KIDS THAT WANTED PROTECTION FROM BULLIES, PEOPLE WHO WERE AFRAID OF THEIR NEIGHBORS, WOMEN WHO WERE BEING STALKED BY THEIR EX-LOVERS...
CHILDREN WHO WANTED THEIR FATHER TO STOP HITTING MOMMY.

YOU BETTER HAVE DINNER READY WHEN I GET BACK! YOU HEAR ME, ANGELA!?
HEY!
HEY, WHAT—
AAH!

YOU THINK THIS IS SCARY?
YOU DON'T KNOW THE MEANING OF THE WORD!
OH, JESUS! OH, GOD! LET ME GO! I CAN'T TAKE THIS!
THINK OF WHAT YOUR KIDS FEEL EVERY TIME YOU BEAT YOUR WIFE! THEY HEAR ABOUT DADS KILLING MOMS ON TV, AND THEY'VE GOT TO WONDER!
H-HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THAT?
I KNOW *EVERYTHING!* I KNOW WHAT IT'S LIKE TO BE A *LITTLE KID* AND WATCH *DAD* KICK *THE CRAP* OUT OF *MOM!*
I KNOW THE FEAR, THE HORROR, AND THE PAIN A CHILD FEELS WHEN THEY *SEE THAT!*
OH, GOD! OH, GOD! OH, GOD!
I'LL NEVER DO IT AGAIN! I SWEAR! PLEASE!
YOU *DO* AND I'LL BE *BACK!*
AND I'LL SHOW YOU WHAT IT *FEELS LIKE* TO BE SOMEONE'S *PUNCHING BAG!*

TOM CALLED ME LATER THAT NIGHT. HE NEEDED SOMEONE TO TALK TO SO I MET HIM AT THE SANTA MONICA PIER.
THIS JOB IS STARTING TO GET TO ME, LINDA. I'M FEELING THE PRESSURE OF ALL THOSE PEOPLE AND THEIR EXPECTATIONS.
THE CITY WANTED US TO BUST DRUG DEALERS, BUT THERE ARE SO MANY OTHER PROBLEMS OUT THERE, AND THEY CAN'T BE SOLVED WITH FISTS.
WHY DID YOU STORM OFF TODAY? WHAT WAS IN THAT LETTER?
IT WASN'T JUST THAT LETTER. I'D READ ABOUT 20 THAT SAID THE SAME THINGS. WHEN I READ THE LAST ONE I SNAPPED. I HAD TO GO OUT AND DO SOMETHING.
TOM.. WHAT DID YOU DO?
I TOLD SOMEONE I'D MESS HIM UP IF HE EVER BEAT HIS WIFE AGAIN.
YOU HAVE A THING FOR WIFE-BEATERS?
YEAH. BUT I DON'T KNOW IF IT DID ANY GOOD. WHAT I SAID TO HIM, I MEAN.
MM... WE ALL FOUND SOMETHING IN THOSE LETTERS THAT AFFECTED US PERSONALLY. I CAN THINK OF A FEW THINGS THAT ARE HAUNTING ME RIGHT NOW.
I DON'T THINK ANY OF US COULD BLAME YOU.
I CERTAINLY HAD SOME FANTASIES OF MY OWN THAT I WANTED TO ACT OUT.
...UM... YEAH, WELL...

I'VE... HAD A FEW FANTASIES OF MY OWN SINCE I MET YOU.
WELL, NOW... THAT SURE WAS A MAJOR CHANGE OF SUBJECT.
THOSE FANTASIES WOULDN'T INVOLVE RUBBER CHICKENS AND FIRE HOSES, WOULD THEY?
UH, NO... ACTUALLY, I'M KIND OF OLD-FASHIONED IN THAT—
GOOD.

BOOM!
THESE ARE THE SHOES THAT BLAST!
EL PRIMO IS THE ULTRA SALSA!
el primo
THESE SQUAD MEMBERS ARE STARTING TO MAKE A FORTUNE IN ENDORSEMENTS. ONE OF THEM HAS A RECORD DEAL. THE ONE CALLED HARDCASE IS GOING TO STAR IN A MOVIE.
NO ONE IS PAYING ATTENTION TO PROTOTYPE ANYMORE. THAT'S A PROBLEM FOR ULTRATECH.
WHAT DO YOU SUGGEST, STANLEY?
WE START DESIGNING HIS REPLACEMENT. *
* SEE PROTOTYPE #1 FOR ALL THE DETAILS — PHIL

TIME PASSED AND OUR LOVE GREW AS FAST AS OUR BANK ACCOUNTS WE GOT OURSELVES AN OFFICE IN CENTURY CITY AND USED THE ROOF FOR TRYSTS.
I CAN'T BELIEVE I FOUND YOU. SOME PEOPLE SPEND A WHOLE LIFE LOOKING FOR THE ONE.
IT SEEMS INCREDIBLE, DOESN'T IT?
WHO AM I TO COMPLAIN?
SO... DID PETE MOVE OUT YET?
NO HE'S NOT TAKING THIS WELL.
CAN'T SAY I BLAME HIM. I DON'T KNOW HOW I'D FEEL IF I LOST YOU
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The Squad
THIS IS THE RECEPTION AREA. WE GOT A SECRETARY AND EVERYTHING
THE MAN'S INSTALLING OUR PHONE SYSTEM TODAY
HEY, CELIA... HOW'S IT GOING?
FINE, THANKS! I'M JUST GETTING MY DESK IN ORDER
OH, AND THE CABLE GUY CAME BY WHILE YOU WERE GONE. HE SAID IT'S WORKING NOW
THANKS
HI, CARLOS!
THIS IS SO COOL, HAVING AN OFFICE AND EVERYTHING! I CAN'T BELIEVE HOW WELL IT'S GOING

HERE'S MINE! THE TV'S ALL SET UP.
NAW, I JUST WANTED IT FOR THE NEWS. MAYBE A LITTLE AMC WHEN I NEED TO REMIND MYSELF WHAT GOOD MOVIES LOOK LIKE.
GNS STEREO
SUN
I HOPE YOU'RE NOT PLANNING TO TURN INTO A COUCH POTATO NOW.
IN LOS ANGELES TODAY, A MAN OPENED FIRE ON HIS WIFE AND CHILDREN BEFORE COMMITTING SUICIDE.
GNS
GNS NEWS
Richard T
OH, GOD.. TURN IT OFF, PLEASE. I HEAR ENOUGH HORROR STORIES AS IT IS.
NO, WAIT!
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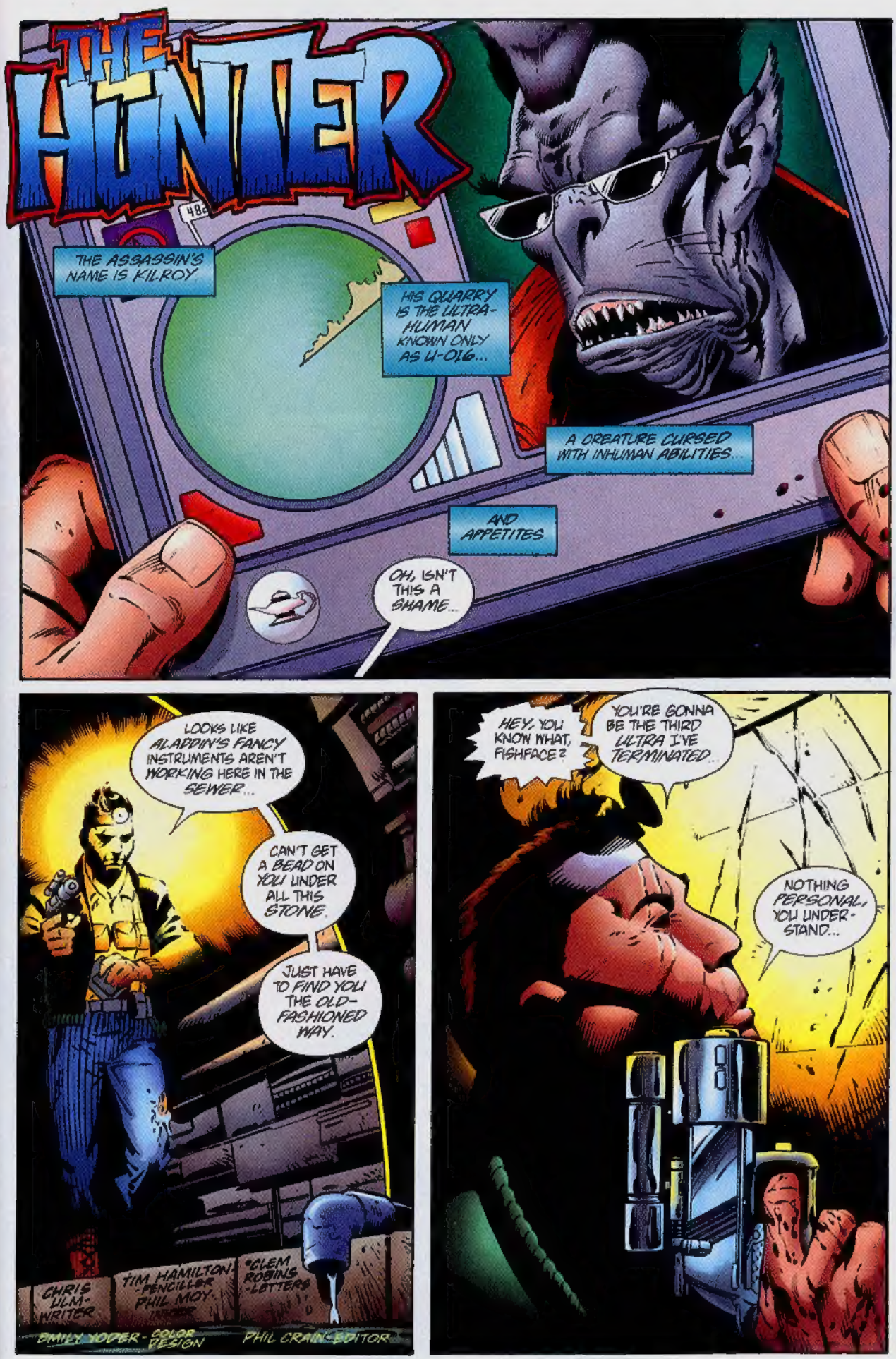
POLICE SAID GEORGE MOORPARK WAS AN UNEMPLOYED OFFICE MANAGER WHO LOST CONTROL WHILE ARGUING WITH HIS WIFE.
FRIENDS SAY MOORPARK HAD A HISTORY OF VIOLENCE TOWARD HIS FAMILY...
GNS NEWS
BUT NO ONE DID ANYTHING TO STOP IT.
NO...
HIS WIFE AND TWO CHILDREN, AGED FIVE AND SEVEN, WERE KILLED BY A SHOTGUN...
TOM, WHAT...?
NO! NO! PLEASE! NO!
HE'S THE GUY I THREATENED! THE ONE I TOLD NEVER TO BEAT HIS WIFE AGAIN!
IS THIS WHAT GOOD INTENTIONS GET YOU?!
NEXT ISSUE:
CITY ON FIRE!


THE HUNTER
THE ASSASSIN'S NAME IS KILROY
HIS QUARRY IS THE ULTRA-HUMAN KNOWN ONLY AS U-016...
A CREATURE CURSED WITH INHUMAN ABILITIES...
AND APPETITES
OH, ISN'T THIS A SHAME...
LOOKS LIKE ALADDIN'S FANCY INSTRUMENTS AREN'T WORKING HERE IN THE SEWER...
CAN'T GET A BEAD ON YOU UNDER ALL THIS STONE.
JUST HAVE TO FIND YOU THE OLD-FASHIONED WAY.
CHRIS ULM-WRITER
TIM HAMILTON-PENCILLER
PHIL MOY-INKER
*CLEM ROBINS-LETTERS
EMILY YODER-COLOR DESIGN
PHIL CRAIG-EDITOR
HEY, YOU KNOW WHAT, FISHFACE?
YOU'RE GONNA BE THE THIRD ULTRA I'VE TERMINATED...
NOTHING PERSONAL, YOU UNDERSTAND...

"THEY'RE WORRIED THAT YOU ULTRAS ARE GONNA WIPE OUT THE HUMAN RACE.
"JUST MY BOSSES ARE A LITTLE CONCERNED ABOUT THE NUMBER OF FREAKS POPPIN' OUT OF THE WOOD-WORK NOWADAYS.
"I'M HERE TO MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T HAPPEN."
SEE, IT'S COME DOWN TO SURVIVAL OF THE FITTEST...
AND I'M EVOLUTION IN ACTION!
BLAM
WAIT A MINUTE--THE BODY!
TORN TO PIECES--! MY GUN COULD NOT HAVE POSSIBLY--

AAAHHH!
GREETINGS, HUMAN...
UNGHH!
YOUR WORDS SHARPEN MY HUNGER FOR KNOWLEDGE...
FOOL! DO YOU THINK ONE SUCH AS I CAN BE HARMED BY SUCH A FEEBLE WEAPON?
WHO--?
I AM RUNE. AND YOU--

YOU THINK YOURSELF A HUNTER...
BASKING IN THE GLORY OF YOUR PETTY THIEVERY...

STEALING THE LIFE FROM THESE ULTRA-HUMANS...
ALLOWING THEIR FLESH TO BE FOREVER UNHARVESTED...
THEIR ELDRITCH ENERGIES TO GO UNCLAIMED...

NO LONGER!
FOR I AM THE DARK GOD...
AND THE EARTH IS MY HUNTING GROUND!
RUNE
created by Barry Windsor-Smith and Chris Ulm